

That Isn't Like You

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Still partially under Ragyo's twisted influence, Ryuko is a bit snippity. Satsuki, her Elites, and Nudist Beach trust that Mako will bring the surly hero back to her senses.

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Mako was shaken awake in her seat outside of the reinforced room that Ryuko was locked up in. She shook her head, blinking up at Satsuki and Nonon. They returned the stare, both looking aggravated, though definitely not at her.

"Did something happen?" Mako asked, smoothing out the lapels of Senketsu's skirt as she rose from her seat. The kamui's one eye looked up at her, then to the other women.

"No." Satsuki replied, Nonon huffing and continuing on, "and that's exactly the problem. That brat refuses to communicate with us unless she's making fun of us. We sat in there for an hour doing nothing but staring." The tiny Deva sneered, folding her arms over her chest. "It's worse than babysitting."

Satsuki patted Nonon's shoulder. "Even though the removal of Junketsu helped us get a bit of Ryuko back, Ragyo's brainwashing went further than that." Her hand tightened on Nonon's shoulder, and her companion put her hand over hers. "I did not expect it to be so bad, but I've always been able to steel myself against Mother's manipulation. The life fibres inside of Ryuko must be adding to the affect. Ragyo has a tighter grip with something other than the mind to toy with." Satsuki's eyes were dark, and it looked as if she was about to snarl. The Student Council President closed her eyes and took a deep breath, Nonon linking their fingers and squeezing in a form of comfort.

"It's nearly her lunch time, so we figured giving her a rest from interaction while she waits for her meal would put her in a calmer mood. It'll be your job to bring her lunch, Underachiever." Nonon told Mako, the younger girl nodding. "Let's all go to the mess hall. I'm tired of being in this part of the ship." With the taller girls in tow, Nonon led them out of the holding area.

Sat a table with Satsuki and three of her Devas, Mako watched Nonon and Houka play a game of cards while Uzu primed his new weapons, cleaning and sharpening the menacing claws. Satsuki sat across from her, drinking a cup of Soroi's tea while the butler loyally stood next to her.

"Mankanshoku," Mako started when her ruler spoke her name, "it is not like you to sit still for so long. We took our seats almost forty minutes ago." Satsuki noted, motioning to Soroi for a refill.

"I just have things on my mind." Mako replied, absently petting the lapel above Senketsu's eye. In return, he tightened ever so slightly around her torso, his own way of giving her a hug. Mako smiled lightly.

"No doubt." Satsuki nodded, observing her. "You and Ryuko, you have been close since day one, haven't you?" Her sapphire gaze drifted to Senketsu. "Even her kamui has taken a liking to you."

"Senketsu's friendly," Mako smiled at her in a subdued way. Satsuki looked at her oddly. "He cares so much about Ryuko, too. I think that's why we get along so well. Ryuko brought us together!"

The Iron Queen leaned back in her seat. "Is that so?" She smiled wryly when the small student nodded with complete resolve. "That's an interesting prospect, Mankanshoku. Though, Senketsu isn't like Junketsu, or any other article of clothing made out of life fibres, I will admit. It's almost as if he's sentient."

"Senketsu has a soul," Mako responded, petting the lapel above Senketsu's eye, which shone up at her. "Ah, don't cry Senketsu! You really look like you're about to!" The girl abruptly stood from her seat and hugged herself. He constricted around her again, tighter this time, his eye closing. Satsuki and her Devas looked on at the odd scene.

"A soul, you say..." Satsuki murmured, Nonon telling Mako to calm down and take her seat. Another few minutes passed, and Ira

emerged from the kitchen.

"Matoi's food is ready to be taken to her." He spoke as he placed the bag of containers in front of Mako. "There's enough there for both of you. Be careful not to spill it, Mankanshoku."

"Geeze! Have some more faith in me, senpai! I'm a doctor's daughter!" She pouted, taking the bag of food. The group could hear Barazo's proud "*That's right!*" from somewhere aboard the ship. Ira grunted, staring down at Mako with his perpetual frown, before he tapped the top of her head with his two fingers and strode back to the kitchen. Mako huffed.

"Yell if you need anything." Uzu told Mako before sending her into Ryuko's room. "I'll be able to hear you."

"Sanageyama and I will be in there in a heartbeat if you're in trouble." Satsuki assured her. "You're our best chance at bringing my little sister back to her senses. Be careful." The door was opened, and Mako walked in.

Sat in the middle of the room, Ryuko lazily rocked from side to side, her still-spiked hair waving a little bit. Her expression was bored, hands in her lap. About to sigh, it was turned into a gasp of delight when she heard the door open and close. "Mako, is that you?" She asked, a large grin on her face.

"Hello, Ryuko," Mako replied happily. "I brought lunch!"

"Yes, you did," The taller girl rose, turning to face Mako. She approached the small girl, grin thinning and becoming devious. Ryuko stood directly in front of Mako and ignored the bag of food, propping a hand on her hip and using the other to stroke Mako's cheek. "And I am so hungry."

It took the majority of Mako's willpower to take a step back and make her way to the small low table set up in the room, all while keeping

most of the blush off of her face. Ryuko was completely naked, and if that wasn't enough to make her hot, she had to flirt with her 100% of the time. This Ryuko wasn't *her* Ryuko, or was she? She was just Ryuko without any shame, right? Mako didn't know it would have made her best friend and girlfriend so different.

Ryuko slunk along after her, plopping down at the table. "So, what did the pervert make today? More poorly-recreated Mankanshoku croquettes? Or is it that gross, overboiled ramen again?"

"Gamagoori-senpai is a good cook, Ryuko. You shouldn't be so mean." Mako scolded, to which Ryuko merely waved her off. "He works hard to make food everyone can enjoy."

"Everyone but me." Ryuko sighed dramatically, putting her feet up on the table. She smirked when Mako pushed them off and began to unpack the food. "Speaking of things I don't enjoy, who invited that kamui in here? Did you forget one of the deals we had?" Mako looked down at Senketsu, who looked up at her tiredly. "You stay naked, or at least in your panties, around me, and I don't try to choke anyone out."

Mako paused once the food was set out. "Just give a minute." She smiled, trotting over to the door. She stripped out of Senketsu, holding him with one arm, before pounding on the heavy metal door. Uzu opened the door, Satsuki at his side. She looked down at Mako quizzically. Mako handed Senketsu off to Satsuki, the tall woman looking into the room at her sister. Ryuko, laying on her back with one leg crossed over the other, smirked and waved at her. Satsuki frowned, nodded to Mako, and closed the door.

"Now, that's much better." Ryuko praised. "But the socks and shoes still gotta go. Well, shoes at least." Mako kicked off her shoes and Ryuko nodded with a smile. "You're wearing your pinks today, huh? They look so good on you." She gushed as Mako served Ryuko her portion.

"Thank you!" Mako smiled. "Hmm, it looks like Gamagoori-senpai made us sandwiches today. Oh! And this thermos probably has some soup in it. Here's some juice, Ryuko."

"Thanks, babe. Man, I hope the sandwiches taste good." Ryuko sat up, cracking open the bottle of juice and taking a long drink.

"I'm sure they'll be delicious! We were able to restock our provisions in Osaka a couple of days ago." Mako replied while Ryuko took a large bite of her sandwich. Mako took out a bag of snacks, opened it up, and started munching on them.

"Mm," Ryuko hummed, swallowing her mouthful. "These are good. Not as good as you, obviously, but still good." Mako choked on her chips, coughing. "Oh, shit! You okay?" Ryuko crawled over to her in a hurry, her hands hovering over Mako's back as the smaller girl hacked. Mako nodded, her hand over her mouth. "Uh, ah! The Heimlich manoeuvre!" Toned arms wrapped around Mako's stomach, and Ryuko pulled Mako upright on her knees in front of her. "I've got you, babe!"

"Ryuko, nothing is lodged in my-" Mako wasn't sure what stopped her breath first, feeling Ryuko's tight abs against her back, or the powerful squeeze of her girlfriend's strong arms. "R-Ryuko!"

"Are you okay?" Ryuko seemed panicked, a bit of her true self shining through. "Did I help? Can you breathe now?"

"I-I'm okay now, don't worry!" Mako replied, gripping Ryuko's forearms. Ryuko sighed, letting her forehead drop against Mako's shoulder. "We should get back to eating now though, that soup is going to get cold! Even though it's in a thermos... I'm sure it'll still cool down!"

"In a minute." Ryuko replied stubbornly, sitting down on her butt and pulling Mako back to do the same, the smaller girl between her legs. "You're so warm, and you smell good. It's been too long since I had one of your hugs."

"You're the one hugging me, silly Ryuko." Mako smiled, leaning back against Ryuko. The taller of the two grunted, pressing her lips against the crook of Mako's shoulder and neck. Mako felt the vibration of mumbled words against her skin, and tilted her head so her head was against Ryuko's. "What was that?"

"I wanna kiss you." Ryuko muttered. Mako turned her head to look at her. There was a bit of pink in her cheeks, clashing with the harsh orange under her eyes. If there was one thing those streaks of orange were good for, it was making the blues of her eyes so much more alive and vibrant. Mako felt her cheeks heating up, too.

"Let me turn around." Mako said quietly. She repositioned herself, and Ryuko didn't waste any time. The rush wasn't like her, but the gentleness of the kiss was. For the first time since she was brainwashed by Ragyo, Ryuko didn't immediately try to get to tongue, though she still groped for Mako's rear instead of cupping her neck and cheek, something she did when they were still in Honnoji. Mako placed her hands against Ryuko's collarbone, pulling away. She smiled, but it was quickly muted by Ryuko's lips once again.

They were both out of breath when Ryuko was done kissing her the second time. "I need-" Ryuko panted, "-To kiss you more. Something tugs at me, down in my chest. It feels so familiar," they both ducked in for another kiss, Ryuko grabbing for Mako's bra straps while Mako cupped her jaw. Tucking her elbows against Mako's sides, Ryuko toppled them over and rolled so she was partially on top of her.

Ryuko eased away from Mako. "This feels right. It feels good. Like, this is how it's supposed to be." The taller girl hovered over Mako, one leg between both of Mako's. "Was I doing it wrong before...?"

Mako ran her thumbs over Ryuko's cheekbones. "No, you weren't kissing me the... *wrong* way before, just not the way Ryuko would." She told Ryuko quietly, face flushed. Looking up at Ryuko, she smiled.

"That's right..." Ryuko grinned back down at her. "Yeah. Kissing you all rough-like isn't right. That isn't me." Her grin soon became a smirk, lowering down on Mako. "But I don't think I quite have the hang of it. We should practice some more."

"Mhmm!" Mako threw her arms around Ryuko's shoulders. "You know... there are things besides kissing that you need to practice too, Ryuko..."

Ryuko pushed one of her hands up Mako's bra, squeezing. "You aren't leaving my room tonight, you little tease."

Mako giggled in delight.